

my votes. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall 92, "yea" on rollcall 93, "yea" on rollcall 94 and "yea" on rollcall 95.

**DR. CARIDAD PEREZ COMPLETES
THIRTY YEARS OF ACADEMIC
EXCELLENCE**

HON. ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 22, 1999

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, today I am honored to pay tribute to Dr. Caridad Perez, a dear friend and an outstanding educator who had completed thirty years of excellent academic achievements.

As Principal of Edison Private School, Dr. Caridad Perez has been a positive influence in the lives of the many students with whom she actively interacts, as well as with the teachers and faculty members who seek her wisdom and experience for guidance.

It is through Dr. Caridad's leadership, hard work and dedication to improving the lives of youth that she has helped scores of students acquire not only an exceptional, solid education, but a strong sense of values and morals that will help carry each student through a lifetime of success.

On Sunday, April 25th, at the Tropicana Fountainbleu Hilton in Miami Beach, many of Dr. Caridad's grateful students and highly appreciative staff will gather for a festive luncheon accompanied by music to honor the loyal and beloved principal of Edison Private School for the praise and honor that she so earnestly deserves.

I ask that my Congressional colleagues join me in celebrating Dr. Caridad's thirty years in educational excellence.

**84TH COMMEMORATION OF
ARMENIAN GENOCIDE**

SPEECH OF

HON. MICHAEL E. CAPUANO

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 21, 1999

Mr. CAPUANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 84th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide. On April 24, 1915, a group of Armenian religious, political, and intellectual leaders were summarily arrested, taken to Turkey and murdered, commencing a dark and solemn period in the history of Armenians. From 1915 to 1923, the Ottoman Empire launched a systematic campaign to exterminate Armenians. In eight short years, more than 1.5 million Armenians suffered through atrocities such as deportation, forced slavery, and torture. Most were ultimately slaughtered.

And yet, despite irrefutable evidence, Turkey has refused to admit the Armenian Genocide occurred, and continues to harbor hatred towards its neighbors. In addition to denying the crimes committed against the Armenian people, Turkey continues to block the flow of humanitarian aid and commerce to Armenia.

In the face of this tragedy, children and grandchildren of the survivors of the Armenian Genocide have gone on to positively impact society, while at the same time preserving

their heritage and unique identity. Over 60,000 Armenian-Americans live in the greater Boston area. Within Massachusetts, many of these Armenians have formed public outreach groups seeking to educate society about Armenia's culture. One particular group, Project Save, operates out of Watertown, Massachusetts. "Project Save collects photographs of Armenian people and places in the homeland and the world-wide diaspora." This remarkable organization preserves the Armenian culture and history through restoration of photographs from all over the world. Some of these photographs date back as early as 1893.

Last year, the world, once again, united to condemn atrocities committed towards fellow human beings. Both the United Nations Human Rights Commission and the General Assembly adopted a resolution, introduced by Armenian Ambassador Rouben Shugarian, to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the UN Genocide Convention. By adopting the resolution, member nations recognized that "the crime of genocide [was] an odious scourge which had inflicted great losses on humanity and was convinced that international cooperation was required to facilitate the speedy prevention and punishment of the crime of genocide." Here in the United States Congress, I am a proud cosponsor of a resolution honoring the memory of the victims of the Armenian genocide and calling for the United States to encourage the Republic of Turkey to acknowledge and commemorate the atrocity committed against the Armenian population by the Ottoman Empire.

It is sad and frustrating that at the beginning of this century, Armenians were murdered en masse, and now at the end of the 20th century the same type of brutal killing of innocent people continues. Since 1988, the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict has costs thousands of lives and produced over 1.4 million refugees.

Let me say, that as a member of the Congressional Armenian caucus, I will continue to work with my colleagues and with the Armenian-Americans in my district. Together we will demand more accountability from Azerbaijan and Turkey for their persistent bullying of their neighbor and search for a way to end the Armenian people's suffering. We must continue to be vigilant, we must preserve the cultural history of Armenians, and we must work towards ending crimes against all humanity.

EARTH DAY 1999

HON. DANNY K. DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 22, 1999

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, as a member of this body, I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge Earth Day. We have made great strides in elevating the protection and knowledge of our treasured natural resources.

Mr. Speaker, Earth Day matters. It raises the awareness of Americans and is a catalyst for positive change. Since the first Earth Day in 1970, Americans have gathered to celebrate the preservation of our environment and to focus on the work that is left to be done. Earth Day has always been a day to celebrate the environment and our natural heritage. It has also served to mark the importance of environmental protection and responsible living.

Earth Day has been a catalyst for the enactment of some of our nation's most important laws. Laws such as the Clean Air Act of 1970; The Clean Water and Safe Drinking Water Act and the Community Right-to-Know laws. These laws have enabled regulatory agencies to better understand what, where, and when pollutants enter our environment.

I am proud of my strong environmental voting record. I strongly support H.R. 525, the Defense of the Environments Act. I challenge my colleagues to work towards its passage. I can think of no better way to commemorate the importance of Earth Day than to pass this comprehensive bill.

I am also proud to support H.R. 960, Endangered Species Recovery Act of 1999. If passed, this bill would ensure the recovery of our Nation's declining biological diversity; reaffirm and strengthen this Nation's commitment to protect wildlife; safeguard our children's economic and ecological future; and provide assurances to local governments, communities, and individuals in their planning and economic development efforts.

Earth Day must also serve as a reminder that even today, we still have a need for improvement. People in our poorest communities are struggling for environmental justice. They continue to struggle for their civil and human rights here and abroad. From Louisiana's "Cancer Alley" to Native American reservations' nuclear problems, and from the plight of the people living along the border in the Maquiladora region to Chicago's West and South Side, millions of Americans live in housing and surrounded by physical environments that are over-burdened with environmental problems from hazardous waste, toxins and dioxins, incinerators, petrochemical plants, lead contamination, polluted air and unsafe water. These factors continue to pose a real and grave threat to our nation's public health.

Environmental Justice matters. We must begin to eliminate the mentality that our nation's poorest communities can be used as dumping grounds for our industrial achievements. We must begin to look at the issues of unequal distribution and disproportional impacts on minorities, as well as the problems of green space and living standards. Low income communities must not bear the brunt of selective environmental standards. Today we must mark a new dedication towards bringing a more proper balance to the widening gap between rich and poor community standards.

I also want to speak briefly about our commitments to the international community. It is clear today, maybe more so than in 1970, that there is a global connection through the environment. Since the formation of the International Whaling Commission (IWC) in 1949 and the more recent meeting of the Kyoto convention, we have begun the needed international monitoring and protection of our environment on a global scale. We now must begin to realize the responsibility we have in providing under developed nation with the environmental technology that will allow them to grow as they move towards a more industrialized society.

So today as we mark the 29th anniversary of the first Earth Day, I am reminded that although we in the United States have made major improvements in the last 20 years, we have a way to go and look forward toward this improvement. We must also strive as global citizens toward safer drinking water and cleaner air at home and abroad.